

Western Great Basin 2000 Fire Season Overview

Weather and Fuels

La Nina continued to dominate the area through the fall and winter of 1999-2000. Temperatures in much of Nevada from September through April were the warmest on record. After a very dry autumn, precipitation amounts from mid-January through February were in the normal range, but a dry March left snow pack levels below normal in all but extreme western Nevada (Sierra Front). With snow confined to the upper elevations, there was little to no compaction of the grasses, while heavy loadings of residual fine fuels remained throughout most of northern Nevada.

Early snow melt and light precipitation in mid-April influenced growth in the annual grasses, with green-up being reported up to the 6,500 ft. level statewide about a month ahead of normal. Precipitation in early May resulted in a second heavy crop of cheatgrass, but then warm temperatures combined with dry, windy surface conditions, causing the fine fuels to dry quickly. This trend was especially apparent in southern Nevada, where burning conditions were 4-6 weeks ahead of schedule and both live and dead fuels up to 6 inches in diameter were being totally consumed.

Southern and eastern Nevada entered the season with 50-66% of normal precipitation for the water year. 1,000 hr. fuel moisture values were below normal statewide. By the end of June, most of the fine fuels had already cured, with significantly below average moisture readings also being reported in the live fuels. New all-time maximum ERC and BI values were created as the severity of fuel conditions surpassed the 1999 season.

Although La Nina was dissipating, it still shifted the potential wet weather systems further to the east, directing the monsoonal flow away from Nevada for most of the summer. Weather conditions throughout the season were both hotter and drier than normal, while recurring high-based lightning storms brought little precipitation. Cloudy skies, cooler temperatures, and higher humidities at the end of August helped to moderate fire activity, while significant amounts of rain in southern and eastern Nevada effectively brought an end to the fire season in those areas.

Large Fire Activity

Due to the severe weather and fuel conditions that were prevalent during 2000, fire activity through the end of July outpaced the 1999 season statistics (151% of the fires, 122% of the acres, and 144% of the large fires had been reported). Ultimately, however, the 2000 season resulted in fewer total acres burned because the widespread, severe dry lightning that overwhelmed firefighting resources in early August of 1999 did not materialize in 2000.

The first large fire (and team mobilization) of the year began on June 3rd in the southern portion of the Humboldt-Toiyabe NF. From late June through mid August, large fire activity remained steady. The last large fire of the season was controlled on October 23rd. By that date, 85 large fires had burned a total of 494,034 acres (all agencies plus private). All but 13 of these fires were

lightning caused. This compares to an average of 59 large fires occurring each year from 1995 to 1999. As is generally the case, large fires make up the majority of the total acreage burned; in 2000, large fires accounted for 70% of the total acres burned.

Incident Management Teams

Roughly two-thirds as many team mobilizations occurred within the Western Great Basin Area in 2000 as in 1999. In all, 18 Type 2 Incident Management Team assignments occurred, while 3 Type 1 Teams also saw assignments within the Area. Teams from outside of the Great Basin filled 6 of these assignments (for a total of 43 days), and the 2 Western Great Basin IMTs filled 7 of the assignments (for a total of 54 days).

The national demand for and shortage of Incident Management Teams was a factor in the number of assignments that occurred; if not for the shortage, more team assignments might have taken place within the Area.

Western Great Basin incidents with Incident Management Teams assigned can be broken down as follows:

<u>Agency</u>	<u># of Large Fires</u>	<u># of Team Assignments</u>
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	70	16
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)	10	4
Nevada (State) Division of Forestry (NDF)	2	1
BIA/Tribe	1	0
Department of Defense (DoD)	1	0
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)	1	0

Historical Comparison

The 2000 season ranks third (behind 1999 and 1996) among the past 15 years for the largest number of acres affected by fire. At 1,171, the total number of fires was 131% of the 5-year average of 895 fires, while the total of 699,210 acres burned was 122% of the 5-year average of 574,992 acres.

Fire Rehabilitation Efforts

As in 1999, Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Teams were used to assess the fire damage and provide recommendations for mitigation and restoration in accordance with existing land management plans. Though the resource damage which resulted in 2000 was not as extensive as that seen in 1999, it still raised concerns that cheatgrass and other exotic species would continue to spread, native grasses and plants would decrease, and erosion and riparian area damage would result. The first seed contract was awarded for a total of 1.74 million pounds, covering 237,657 acres.

**Western Great Basin Area
2000 Fire Statistical Summary**

Unit/Agency	Fires by Cause		Acres by Cause		Total Fires	Total Acres
	Human	Lightning	Human	Lightning		
Eastern Nevada Agency	2	0	60	0	2	60
Western Nevada Agency	4	2	555	1,765	6	2,320
Duck Valley Tribe	1	0	554	0	1	554
Bureau of Indian Affairs/Tribes	7	2	1,169	1,765	9	2,934
Elko Field Office	21	94	2,321	312,484	115	314,805
Winnemucca Field Office	30	51	27,960	194,236	81	222,196
Carson City Field Office	52	90	5,309	77,471	142	82,780
Ely Field Office	18	266	259	32,620	284	32,879
Las Vegas Field Office	18	17	71	4	35	75
Battle Mountain Field Office	7	64	1,574	5,866	71	7,440
Bureau of Land Management	146	582	37,494	622,681	728	660,175
Ruby Lake NWR	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fallon & Stillwater NWRs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pahranagat, Desert, Ash Meadows & Moapa NWRs	2	4	1	1,105	6	1,106
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	2	4	1	1,105	6	1,106
Great Basin National Park	1	4	0	11	5	11
Lake Mead NRA	7	3	2	0	10	2
National Park Service	8	7	2	11	15	13
Northern Region	33	34	673	2,032	67	2,705
Western Region	7	29	307	3,645	36	3,952
Southern Region	1	0	0	0	1	0
Nevada Division of Forestry*	41	63	980	5,677	104	6,657
Humboldt-Toiyabe NF (Elko area)	1	2	27	9,498	3	9,525
Humboldt-Toiyabe NF (Ely area)	3	15	700	3,586	18	4,286
Humboldt-Toiyabe NF (Winnemucca area)	0	7	0	213	7	213
Humboldt-Toiyabe NF (Sierra Front & central NV)	23	152	8,797	2,072	175	10,869
Humboldt-Toiyabe NF (Las Vegas area)	57	48	11	2,921	105	2,932
U.S. Forest Service	84	224	9,535	18,290	308	27,825
Department of Defense (Nellis AFB)	0	1	0	500	1	500
Department of Energy (Nevada Test Site)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Federal	0	1	0	500	1	500
Geographic Area Totals	288	883	49,181	650,029	1,171	699,210

Note: BLM totals include other agency/private acres burned.

*NDF statistics have not been verified against the official agency database.

2000 Prescribed Fire Activity

Agency/Unit	Prescribed		Wildland Fire Use	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
Elko Field Office	6	13,799	0	0
Winnemucca Field Office	2	81	0	0
Carson City Field Office	7	2,594	0	0
Ely Field Office	1	1,600	0	0
Las Vegas Field Office	2	7	0	0
Battle Mountain Field Office	0	0	0	0
Bureau of Land Management	18	18,081	0	0
Ruby Lake NWR	0	0	0	0
Pahrnagat/Desert NWRs	0	0	0	0
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	0	0	0	0
Great Basin NP	0	0	0	0
Lake Mead NRA	0	0	0	0
National Park Service	0	0	0	0
Northern Region	0	0	0	0
Western Region	0	0	0	0
Southern Region	0	0	0	0
Nevada Division of Forestry	0	0	0	0
Humboldt-Toiyabe NF	2	1,526	0	0
U.S. Forest Service	2	1,526	0	0
Geographic Area Totals	20	19,607	0	0

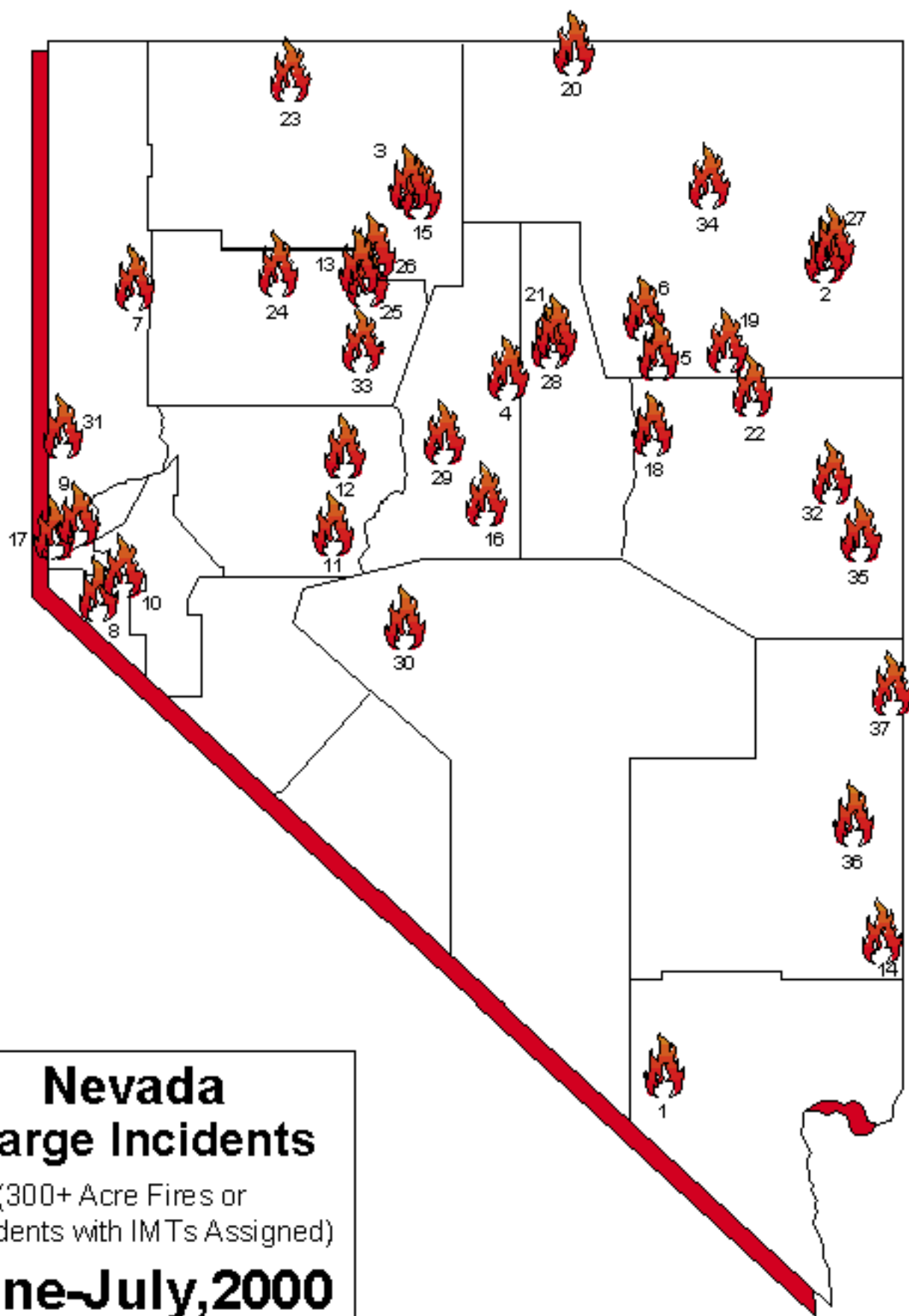
[illegible]

Western Great Basin Large Fires for 2000											
Dispatch Center	Map Ref #	Incident Name	Agency	Latitude	Longitude	Size	Control Date	IMT Assigned	IMT Type	Cause	Significant Impacts
CNIDC	3	Box Canyon	BLM	41 11	117 31	1,032	6/30/00			Lightning	
	4	Tonkin Rd.	BLM	40 37	116 25	1,359	6/25/00			Lightning	
	7	Rock Creek	BLM	40 48	119 20	800	6/27/00			Lightning	In Black Rock Desert - big horn sheep, Lahontan cutthroat trout and wild horse habitat threatened, along with 2 primary residences and 3 outbuildings.
	13	Elbow Canyon	BLM	40 45	117 42	1,145	7/2/00			Lightning	Campers evacuated from Clear Creek. Range and wildlife habitat threatened.
	15	Kelly Creek	BLM	41 14	117 05	37,716	7/5/00	Carr	2	Lightning	
	16	Vigus	BLM	39 39	116 55	714	7/5/00			Lightning	1 residence, 1 other building, watershed, wildlife habitat, and a wilderness study area threatened.
	23	Bilk Creek Complex	BLM	41 47	117 47	87,888	7/21/00	Hutchison	1	Lightning	1 residence, 3 other buildings, telephone poles, sage grouse habitat, cutthroat trout, an abandoned mine, a communication site, and 9-Mile Ranch threatened.
		Double H	BLM	41 38	118 02	70,876	7/20/00			Lightning	
		Cherry Creek	BLM	41 34	117 47	23,483	7/20/00			Lightning	
		Willow Creek	BLM	41 42	117 45	1,176	7/19/00			Lightning	Some power lines destroyed.
		Riverside	BLM	41 35	117 56	100	7/18/00			Lightning	
		Dry Creek	BLM	41 34	117 47	100	7/20/00			Lightning	1 dozer and 3 haystacks burned.
		Garden Springs	BLM	41 34	117 47	100	7/20/00			Lightning	
	24	Prince Royal	BLM	40 37	118 09	14,273	7/22/00	Suwyn	2	Lightning	Voluntary evacuation of Imlay & Unionville. 1 seasonal residence lost. Threat to other structures, sage grouse habitat, mining operations, Hwy 40, and grazing.
	25	Pumpnickel	BLM	40 39	117 33	782	7/20/00			Lightning	1 sheep ranch and 1 residence threatened.
	26	Gregg Canyon	BLM	40 43	117 32	1,847	7/19/00			Lightning	Wildlife habitat, horses, and range resources threatened.
	29	Berndt	BLM	39 43	116 59	2,840	7/23/00	Burdick	2	Lightning	2 residences, 1 communication site, a wild horse HMA, livestock, cultural resource sites, and the Callaghan U.S. Navy repeater threatened.
	41	Keystone	BLM	40 52	118 03	6,370	8/3/00			Lightning	Evacuated people from 1 cabin. 1 residence, livestock and the Keystone mine threatened.
	52	Jungo Complex	BLM	40 59	117 53	3,663	8/4/00			Lightning	2 outbuildings threatened.
	53	Cow Creek	BLM	40 40	118 40	9,978	8/5/00			Lightning	
	54	Pine Forest	BLM	41 39	118 48	640	8/6/00			Lightning	Sage grouse and other wildlife habitat, Knett Creek Reservoir, sage grouse and other wildlife habitat threatened.
	55	Fireball	USFS	39 50	119 12	2,897	8/7/00			Lightning	A wild horse herd management area threatened.
	56	MM 185	BLM	40 59	117 36	1,846	8/10/00			Lightning	I-80, wildlife habitat, high voltage poles, grasslands, 5 residences threatened.
	57	Button Point	BLM	41 02	117 33	643	8/8/00			Lightning	4 camp trailers destroyed, 1 single-wide trailer damaged. Grazing and farm areas, I-80, Hwy 93, 18 residences, threatened and endangered species, cultural sites, range, livestock, power lines, and 20 outbuildings threatened.
	62	Whiskey	BLM	40 23	116 57	1,553	8/15/00			Human	Wildlife habitat, livestock forage, 1 residence, 3 outbuildings, 1 FAA tower, a ranch, a sheep camp, and watershed threatened.
	63	South Willow	BLM	40 31	118 40	14,892	8/18/00			Human	Historic mine shacks, wildlife, range land, 1 residence, and sage grouse habitat threatened.
	68	Blue Mtn.	BLM	40 58	118 05	437	8/29/00			Lightning	
	69	Hot Springs Ranch	BLM	41 01	117 03	320	9/1/00			Lightning	

	70	Mahogany	BLM	41 31	118 57	12,255	9/15/00			Human	Wildlife habitat, WSA, sage grouse, and Lahontan cutthroat trout threatened.
						213,837					

Western Great Basin Large Fires for 2000											
Dispatch Center	Map Ref #	Incident Name	Agency	Latitude	Longitude	Size	Control Date	IMT Assigned	IMT Type	Cause	Significant Impacts
SFIDC	8	China	BLM	38 50	119 40	554	6/29/00	Terwilliger (SF)	2		12 residences, 1 commercial property, and Washoe cultural area threatened.
	9	Reno Complex:	BLM	39 45	119 45	18,080	7/2/00	Carvalho	1	Lightning	Washoe Co. initiated voluntary evacuation. Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, microwave tower, 65 residences, numerous other buildings, and structures in Antelope and Warm Springs Valleys threatened.
		Mitchell Canyon				604	7/2/00			Lightning	
		Antelope				7,690	7/2/00			Lightning	
		Hungry				4,000	7/2/00			Lightning	
		Olinghouse				1,795	7/2/00			Lightning	
		Jones				2,870	7/2/00			Lightning	
		Turtle				1,076	7/2/00			Lightning	
	10	Ramsey	BLM	39 29	119 17	5,666	7/4/00	Burdick	2	Lightning	Ramsey Cornstalk Mine, wildlife habitat, microwave facilities, and livestock forage threatened.
	11	East Gate	BLM	39 13	117 52	650	7/2/00			Lightning	
	12	Edwards Creek	BLM	39 38	117 37	2,000	7/3/00?			Lightning	
	17	Seneca	USFS	39 40	119 51	1,110	7/11/00	Linardos (SF)	2	Human	Threat to 300 structures, 5 commercial properties, several subdivisions and the Reno watershed. Voluntary evacuations initiated. Engine was burned over and crew deployed fire shelters.
		Aurora	USFS	38 19	118 44	207	7/24/00			Lightning	Cultural resources, private lands threatened.
	30	Wall	USFS	38 44	117 16	7,530	7/27/00	Schell	2	Human	1 historic mine building destroyed. Ranch structures, sage grouse habitat, watershed, and wilderness threatened.
	31	Cold Springs	BLM	39 42	119 58	400	7/25/00			Human	Some residential evacuations ordered. Private land, public watershed threatened.
	33	Cottonwood	BLM	39 20	118 52	5,447	8/2/00			Human	Bolivia ghost town, power lines, microwave tower, cultural sites, a native burial site, and wildlife habitat threatened.
	38	Arrow Creek	State	39 29	119 48	2,900	8/4/00?	Melton	1	Lightning	6 homes damaged; voluntary evacuations initiated. Mt. Rose wilderness, a watershed, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, 250 residences, and power lines threatened. On SW edge of Reno - Arrow Creek Community.
	39	Red Rock	BLM	39 45	119 57	2,203	8/3/00			Lightning	Some primary residences threatened.
	40	Twin Peaks	BLM	39 36	117 59	38,310	8/23/00	Praytor	2	Lightning	CWN helicopter accident - 1 fatality (pilot). Three residences, five ranches, cattle, critical sage grouse habitat, big horn sheep, 400-600 cattle, ranch hands, desert big horn winter range, and a wilderness study area threatened.
	42	Golden Complex	BLM	38 31	119 32			Terwilliger (SF)	2	Lightning	1 outbuilding lost. Threat to 25 residences, 2 commercial properties, 25 other buildings - voluntary evacuations. Riparian zones, historic sites, Lahontan cutthroat trout and sage grouse habitat threatened.
	49	Sutcliffe	BLM	39 59	119 38	300	8/4/00			Lightning	
	59	Right Hand	BLM	39 46	119 30	452	8/14/00			Lightning	Palomino Valley area, 25 mi. NE of Reno - numerous residences and watershed threatened.
	72	Como	BLM	39 20	119 28	1,767	10/23/00	Linardos (SF)	2	Human	Began as prescribed fire - strong winds caused escape. Grazing, wildlife habitat, and 2 cabins threatened.
						87,411					

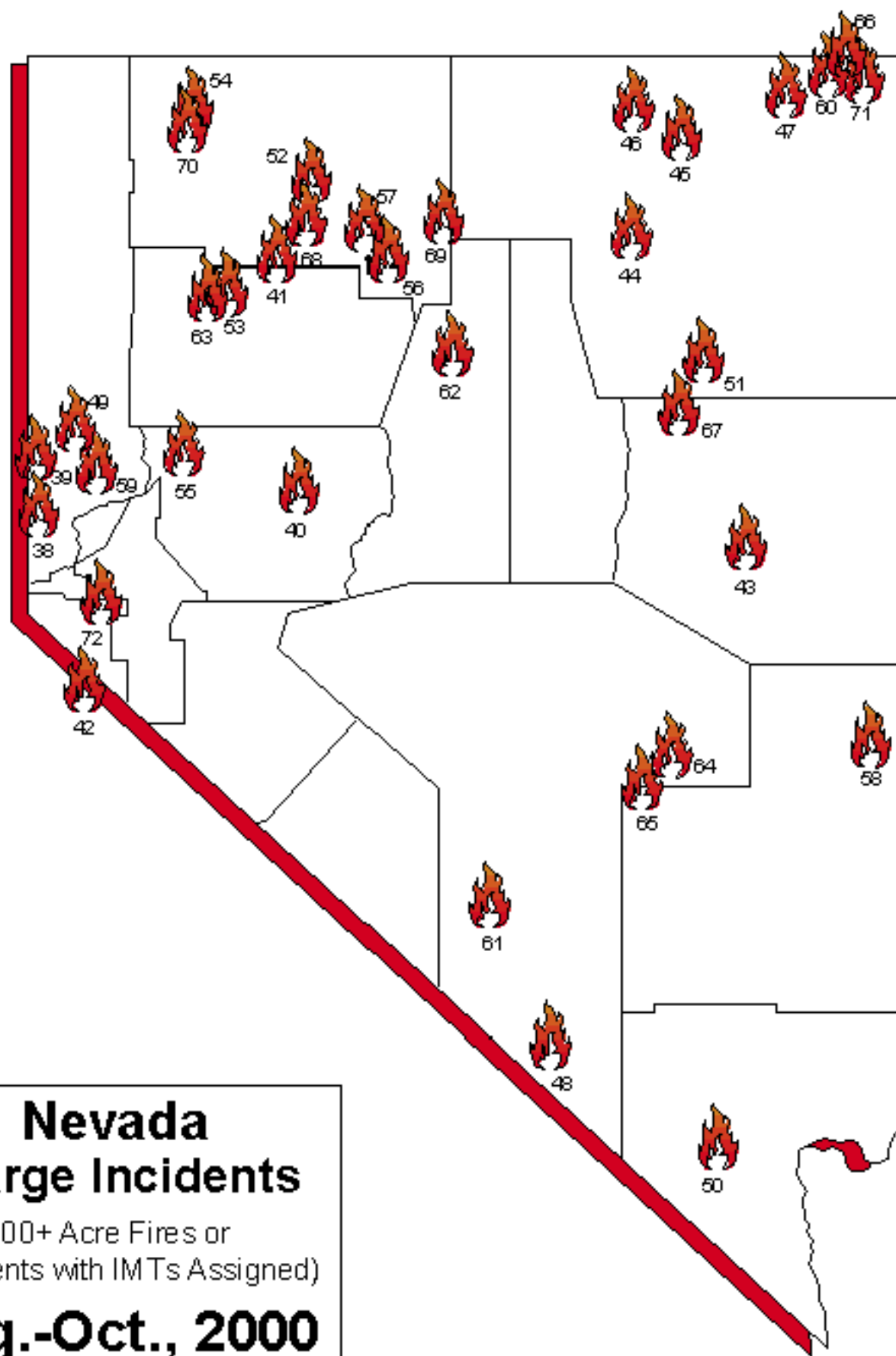
[illegible]



Nevada Large Incidents

(300+ Acre Fires or
Incidents with IMTs Assigned)

June-July, 2000



Nevada Large Incidents

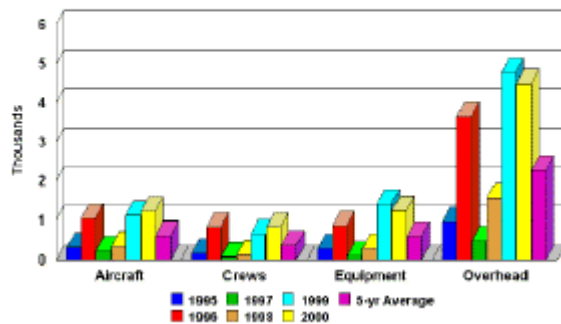
(300+ Acre Fires or
Incidents with IMTs Assigned)

Aug.-Oct., 2000

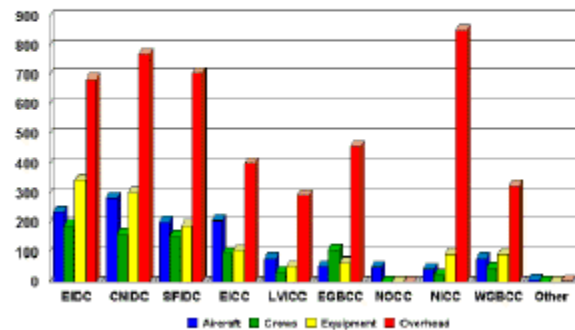
Western Great Basin Coordination Center

2000 Workload Measures

**Total Requests Processed
by Resource Type
1995-2000**



**Total Resource Requests
by Ordering Office and Resource Type
2000**



Total Resource Requests Processed by Year 1995-2000

Year	Aircraft	Crews	Equipment	Overhead	Total
1995	319	176	297	972	1,764
1996	1,060	823	877	3,670	6,430
1997	240	84	109	501	934
1998	353	141	304	1,576	2,374
1999	1,133	660	1,434	4,783	8,010
2000	1,249	825	1,255	4,499	7,828
5-yr. Average	621	377	604	2,300	3,902

Total Resource Requests Processed (by Resource Type and Office Placing the Order) 2000					
Dispatch Center	Aircraft	Crews	Equipment	Overhead	Total
EIDC	235	190	345	689	1,459
CNIDC	285	163	302	772	1,522
SFIDC	202	157	190	705	1,254
EICC	207	96	107	403	813
LVICC	80	35	54	293	462
EGBCC	55	109	67	458	689
WGBCC	81	49	95	324	549
NOCC	51	1	0	0	52
NICC	46	25	95	852	1,018
Other*	7	0	0	3	10
Totals	1,249	825	1,255	4,499	7,828

* "Other" includes the Boise Interagency Logistics Center (overhead), and BLM Boise Smokejumpers, NWCC, and SOCC (aircraft).

Note: All statistics are for orders processed through the Western Great Basin Coordination Center only.

They do not include dispatches on home units or to neighboring units under initial attack agreements (if less than 24 hours in duration). Supply orders are not included.